

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE  
FOOD SAFETY AND INSPECTION SERVICE  
WASHINGTON, DC

# FSIS NOTICE

38-14

8/13/14

## CERTIFYING PRODUCTS UNDER THE EXPORT VERIFICATION AND THE LESS THAN 30 MONTHS OF AGE VERIFICATION QUALITY SYSTEM ASSESSMENT (EV/QSA) PROGRAMS

### I. PURPOSE

This notice re-issues and updates the instructions found in FSIS Notice 12-13 to reflect Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS) and FSIS organizational changes and to remove the references to Statement of Verification (SOV) requirements. This notice provides inspection program personnel (IPP) with instructions for carrying out FSIS's export certification process for meat and poultry products produced and exported under the Export Verification/Quality Systems Assessment Program and the Less Than 30 Months of Age Verification Quality System Assessment Program (herein after EV/QSA programs). Product eligibility under the AMS EV/QSA programs is identified in the importing country's [Export Library](#) requirements.

### II. BACKGROUND

A. Verifications of EV/QSA programs are conducted by FSIS as voluntary reimbursable services. Establishments and other facilities must apply for these services through the District Office (DO) where the establishment or facility at which the services are to be performed is located. Establishments and other facilities requesting voluntary reimbursable inspection services need to complete FSIS Form 5200-6, Application/Approval for Voluntary Reimbursable Inspection Service, and receive approval from the DO for such services before these services can be provided.

B. AMS's Quality Assessment Division administers the EV/QSA programs. The Quality Assessment Division is responsible for reviewing and approving eligible suppliers of meat and poultry products under the EV/QSA programs and for maintaining approved supplier and product lists for individual countries. The EV/QSA programs outline the specified product requirements for individual countries.

### III. APPROVAL OF ESTABLISHMENTS UNDER AN EV/QSA PROGRAM AND RELATED FSIS RESPONSIBILITIES

A. When an establishment asks to be approved for participation in an AMS EV/QSA program, AMS will advise FSIS's Office of Policy and Program Development (OPPD), Import Export Coordination and Policy Development Staff (IECPDS), by e-mail of the establishment's request at [ImportExport@fsis.usda.gov](mailto:ImportExport@fsis.usda.gov).

1. Upon receipt of the AMS e-mail, IECPDS is to acknowledge receipt of the notification by replying to the e-mail at [QAD.AuditService@ams.usda.gov](mailto:QAD.AuditService@ams.usda.gov).
2. IECPDS is to forward the AMS e-mail to the DO where the establishment is located.
3. The DO is to ensure that all IPP who may be involved with the certification of product

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for export under an EV/QSA program receive appropriate training before conducting EV/QSA-related export certifications.

B. Once the establishment passes the initial AMS audit and is approved for an EV/QSA program, IECPDS will receive an electronically-transmitted copy of the audit from AMS. The IECPDS is to promptly notify the DO via e-mail of the approval, and the DO is to inform the Inspector-In-Charge (IIC) for that establishment.

C. AMS will electronically transmit EV/QSA program establishment audit reports to IECPDS. If AMS finds minor deficiencies that do not affect the establishment's eligibility to participate in the program, IECPDS is to notify the DO by e-mail of the deficiencies, and the DO is to instruct the in-plant IPP to be aware of the deficiencies. At the first weekly meeting after receiving such a report, IPP are to ask the establishment about changes made in response to AMS, and about how those changes affect the establishment's program. IPP have access to the EV/QSA program requirements through the following link: [GVD 1030](#). If IPP have concerns that an establishment is not adequately addressing deficiencies, they are to contact their supervisor.

D. If an establishment program is suspended as a result of the deficiencies found in an AMS program audit, AMS will notify IECPDS of the suspension. IECPDS is to notify the DO by e-mail, and the DO is to notify the affected in-plant IPP not to certify exports produced under the affected EV/QSA program until further notice. IECPDS will receive from AMS an electronically-transmitted copy of the notice of program suspension and the audit report. IECPDS is to acknowledge receipt of the program suspension by replying to the electronic transmission. IECPDS is to update the eligible establishment list in the [Export Library](#), if applicable. AMS will notify IECPDS when the establishment implements necessary changes to reestablish eligibility, and AMS accepts them. IECPDS is to notify the DO by e-mail that the establishment is again eligible to produce product for export under the EV/QSA program, and the DO is to notify the affected IPP of this information. The establishment is to maintain a copy of all EV/QSA program audit reports and make them available for IPP review when needed.

#### IV. VERIFICATION PROCEDURES FOR EV/QSA PROGRAMS

A. IPP are to determine whether an establishment has an AMS-approved EV/QSA program. This determination can be made by asking the establishment whether it has such a program at the weekly meeting and by accessing the FSIS [Export Library](#) ([Export Requirements for Countries with an Approved USDA EV Programs](#)) and following the links to the AMS web site on which the list of establishments with approved EV/QSA programs is maintained. A link to the AMS eligible plant list is included in the country's [Export Library](#).

B. IPP are to be aware of the location and contents of the establishment's approved EV/QSA program manual to verify whether the establishment is properly executing its program.

C. IPP can find a list of the products intended for export approved under the EV/QSA Program in the establishment's QSA Manual as required by AMS. The list is to include all items intended for export, the specific product code numbers, and a detailed description of each item. Maintaining this information is an AMS requirement as part of an approved EV/QSA program. The unique product identification system can be accessed by authorized FSIS inspection personnel from the on the [FSIS' Intranet Site](#).

**NOTE:** In situations where a supplier and fabricator are separate establishments, the fabricator is to maintain a list of its approved EV/QSA suppliers, as required by AMS. In addition, AMS requires that the fabricator maintain a list of products that each EV/QSA supplier is approved to provide under its approved EV/QSA program. As part of the approved EV/QSA program, these establishment records are subject to FSIS review.

D. If, based on their verification activities, IPP are concerned that an AMS-approved EV/QSA establishment is not properly executing its EV/QSA program (for example, it is attempting to ship product that is not eligible for the importing country), they are **not to sign** export applications for

the product in question and are to:

1. Notify AMS at [QAD.AuditService@ams.usda.gov](mailto:QAD.AuditService@ams.usda.gov) and provide the following information in the notification;
  - a. Establishment name, address, and number;
  - b. Product type, product code, and quantity of product;
  - c. Date of production, lot number, and shift;
  - d. Date and nature of observation;
  - e. Name of country for which product is intended;
  - f. Export certificate number (if applicable);
  - g. Any other information to verify claim; and
  - h. Name of IPP documenting concerns.
2. Send a courtesy copy of the notification to their immediate FSIS supervisor and to IECPDS ([ImportExport@fsis.usda.gov](mailto:ImportExport@fsis.usda.gov)) and maintain a copy of the message in the inspection office export file; and
3. Take the appropriate enforcement actions and issue a Non-compliance Record if any of the problems with the EV/QSA requirements are also regulatory non-compliance.

## **V. VERIFICATION PROCEDURES FOR PRODUCT INTENDED FOR EXPORT UNDER EV/QSA PROGRAMS**

A. Upon receiving [FSIS Form 9060-6](#), Application for Export Certificate, IPP are to verify that (following the procedures in [FSIS Directive 9000.1](#), *Export Certification*):

1. The establishment is on the AMS EV/QSA list as approved to export to the importing country, and that the product was derived from animals slaughtered after the date the establishment received AMS approval to export that type of product to that country;
2. Each of the products listed on the application is eligible for export to the country under the country specific EV/QSA program, and each product was produced under an AMS EV/QSA program.

B. After determining that the establishment itself is eligible to export to the importing country, and that the specific products are eligible to be exported to that country, IPP are to re-inspect the product as set out in [FSIS Directive 9000.1](#) and [FSIS Directive 9040.1](#), *Reinspection of Product Intended for Export*.

C. If the application or product is not acceptable because an EV/QSA requirement has not been met, IPP, in addition to returning the application un-signed, are to follow the instructions in section IV. D. above.

D. When an FSIS certifying official (e.g. Public Health Veterinarian or Consumer Safety Inspector) receives the appropriate export certification documents, he or she is to verify, as set out in [FSIS Directive 9000.1](#), that the documents are complete and accurate, and that the EV/QSA program requirements were met.

1. If any of the documents are not accurate, he or she is to:
  - a. Notify the establishment and explain the problem;
  - b. Document the problem in a memorandum of interview; and
  - c. Maintain copies of the documents in question and the memorandum of interview in the government file.
2. If the application or product is not acceptable because an EV/QSA requirement has not been met, the certifying official is to follow the instructions in section IV. D. above.
3. If all documents are acceptable, the certifying official is to sign all certifications and maintain a copy in the government file along with the certifications.

**NOTE:** As appropriate, IPP are to document noncompliance in accordance with 9 CFR Part 350.

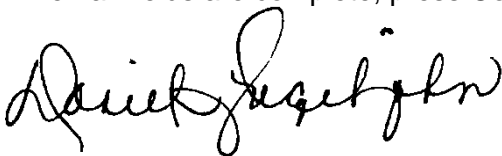
E. All time involved with EV/QSA-related verification activities by IPP is to be charged as a reimbursable service, even when IPP conduct these activities during their established tour of duty. Supervisory personnel are to ensure that IPP are appropriately billing the establishment for these activities. (See [FSIS Directive 9000.1](#), [FSIS Directive 12,600.1](#), *Voluntary Reimbursable Inspection Services*, and [FSIS Directive 12,600.2](#), *Reimbursable Overtime Inspection Services at Meat and Poultry Establishments*)

## VI. QUESTIONS

Refer questions regarding this notice to the IEC PDS through [askFSIS](#), by emailing the question to [ImportExport@fsis.usda.gov](mailto:ImportExport@fsis.usda.gov), or by telephone at 1-855-444-9904. When submitting an askFSIS question, use the Submit a Question tab, and enter the following information in the fields provided:

Subject Field:	Enter <b>Notice 38-14</b>
Question Field:	Enter question with as much detail as possible;
Product Field:	Select <b>Exports</b> from the drop-down menu.
Category Field:	Select <b>Export Certificates</b> from the drop-down menu.
Policy Arena:	Select <b>International (Import/Export)</b> from the drop-down menu.

When all fields are complete, press **Continue** and at the next screen press **Finish Submitting Question**.



Assistant Administrator  
Office of Policy and Program Development